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NFAC 2 February 1979

Excerpts from the Staff Meeting Minutes of 2 February 1979

Lehman noted that the PRC 11th Army is moving and all units in the southern region facing Vietnam are also moving. Lehman added that eight armies and 24 divisions are now involved [redacted] 25X1
Fourteen divisions are in the south on the Vietnam border, and a second echelon seems to be moving down from the north to back them up. Lehman speculated that this activity seems more than what would be required for a punitive border skirmish, and the PRC is probably tempted to go on to Hanoi. A lot of room exists for miscalculation among the PRC, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Lehman said that we are not aware of PRC Vice Premier Teng's private statements to the President regarding this situation. Mr. Carlucci noted that in his public statements Teng has come close to indicating a commitment to invade. In response to the Director's question, Lehman said that Teng is scheduled to return to the PRC on 9 February. The Director noted that the President had asked about combat capabilities of the PRC divisions. Lehman suggested that the Vietnamese forces are better experienced and better armed. Mr. Carlucci added that General Tighe believes that the Vietnamese could easily defeat the Chinese. 25X1
The Director asked that NFAC [redacted] tonight including the quantity and quality of the forces in the border area and the status of the division that started out three days ago from Da Nang. Mr. Carlucci suggested that NFAC may also want to include likely Soviet reactions to any Chinese moves. The Director said that the weather conditions in Northern China should also be addressed and that periodic reports should appear in [redacted] regarding any movement in that area. Lehman emphasized the seriousness of this situation and said that the Administration should be concerned. In response to Mr. Carlucci's comment on Teng's reaction to the Administration's approach to this problem, the Director shared his understanding that Teng was noncommittal. (Action: NFAC) [redacted] *done* 25X1

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NFAC 2 February 1979

The Director highlighted yesterday's PRC meeting on the Middle East, saying that U.S. policy was now at a difficult crossroads. He asked Bowie to have NIO Ames determine what he could do to support Secretary of Defense Brown's forthcoming trip to the Middle East. Bowie said that Ames has had at least one two-hour session with the Secretary's staff helping him prepare for the trip. Later in the meeting, the Director asked that NFAC provide Secretary Brown the latest appraisals of Afghanistan and South Yemen. (Action: NFAC) *done*

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25X1

Noting that he had forwarded a memo on this topic, Hitz suggested that a multi-disciplinary briefing team be assembled to handle the numerous Congressional requests for information on Iran. He said that the Minority members of the Senate Energy Committee have asked to be briefed at Headquarters for four hours on 6 February on the impact of Iran on the Persian Gulf States. Bowie said that he has asked NIO Ames to develop a set of briefings that would be appropriate for such Congressional requests. The Director asked NFAC and OLC to work together on this matter. Bowie noted his preference for briefing the Congressmen at Headquarters rather than on the Hill and said it would be better if there were some Majority members included in the 6 February briefing. (Action: NFAC & OLC) *me*

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SECRET

OLC 2 February 1979

Excerpt from the Staff Meeting Minutes of 2 February 1979

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SECRET

NSC/C 2 February 1979

Extract from the Staff Meeting Minutes of 2 February 1979

Hitz said that the HPSCI has requested a copy of the NITs. Bowie expressed concern that releasing these would be tantamount to releasing Executive Branch policy considerations and before doing so, Dr. Brzezinski should be consulted. The Director expressed concern that releasing them would prevent the formulation of the NITs from being as candid a process as it has been. The Director suggested that Hitz postpone making a response and that this item be put on his agenda for his next meeting with Brzezinski. (Action: NSC/C)

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